

To cope with the problem of extermination, efforts must be directed toward the extermination of the insects in the larval and pupal stages. Mosquitoes have some natural enemies. Night-prowling birds eat the mature insect; while the larvæ form the food of some shore birds, insects, and fish.

The use of crude petroleum spread as a thin film on the surface of a body of water has long been known to kill the larvæ and pupæ, but it is applicable only to small bodies of water, and it is not lasting in its effect. Poisoning of the water must naturally be restricted in its application, but it is effective, and of the agents tried, "phintas oil," which is highly diffusible, is found to give much the best results. Cisterns, rain barrels, and other receptacles in which mosquitoes are apt to breed in large numbers and in which poisoning of the water is not permissible, should be kept covered, while other mosquito-breeding collections of water in which fish cannot be used should be treated by drainage or filling.

THE NORTHERN-MOST FLOATING HOSPITAL

By FELIX J. KOCH

THE question would have been a stumper to us, surely. "Where is the floating hospital that plies farthest north on the Atlantic sea-board?" We investigated and found that as few knew as we did.

We recalled a floating hospital off Winthrop, in Massachusetts Bay, one summer. We did not recall any at Halifax or up the Canadian coast, at least that we had run into. Finally when we came to Newfoundland and embarked for the Labrador we discovered it.

There is but one boat that plies as far as Nain on the Labrador coast and that a filthy sealing steamer known as the *Virginia Lake*. Twice a year this runs as far as Nain, the northern-most limit of regular navigation of the Atlantic. Twice a year it goes to Davis Inlet, not quite so far, and fortnightly it plies to other more southerly ports.

Up on the coast of Labrador there live, in the summer, from twenty to thirty thousand fishermen,—these and the schooner girls who "keep house" for them. For these folk there is no doctor save only when Dr. Grenfell of *Deep Sea Mission* fame happens to drop into the fiord with his hospital ship. The government, however, has come, in a way, to the relief by providing that aboard the *Lake*, which is the mailboat, there is stationed a doctor who dispenses both services and drugs free, to the fishermen.



THE GREAT INDUSTRY.



THE "VIRGINIA LAKE."



DR. GRENFELL'S HOSPITAL AT BATTLE HARBOR.



At every stop of the boat therefore the fishers come out in their dories, surging around the *Lake*, clambering up the companion stairs and disappearing below to meet the Doctor.

What he prescribes, and how, belongs rather to a physician's paper; but when, as often happens, he is summoned ashore, and he finds a patient too sick to be left without care for the fortnight it will take before he returns, he has him brought aboard the *Lake*, where the postmaster, who is a government Receiving Officer, issues government transportation for him to the mission hospitals at Battle or Indian Harbors. And, meantime, he is kept in the little floating hospital here on the ship.

Just a couple of cots in a little cabin, and a port-hole looking out on the sea, where the icebergs lie in numbers. *That* is the hospital. And the nurse—he, too, is a character. Peddle,—Nicholas Peddle, is his name,—a little old man with a gray beard that comes around on the side to the level of the ear lobes. He wears a cap, and is always smoking a pipe, with an old tin beer stopper for cover.

Peddle is a man with a story, and a sad one. A skipper once, his daughter and a servant were washed overboard and drowned on this same cruel Labrador coast. Peddle, moreover, is the bard of the Labrador and his songs are sung in every home in Newfoundland. When there are none on the sick list he paces the deck and jostles the passengers. He is a good story-teller, and spins many a sailor's yarn.

As a nurse I am told he is good. Certainly good-hearted and careful—as care goes on the far Labrador seas.

And of what do they suffer,—these patients? Far and away, by the great majority, the trouble is *tuberculosis*. Up on the Labrador, to-day, a veritable war is being waged against the great white plague. It seems almost to upset all the teachings of these latter days,—the cry of fresh air, sea air, sunlight,—to find that the fishermen, who are in the open from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof, save only when storms will not permit, should suffer from the scourge. The explanation, however, is not far to be sought. When the fisherman has raised his great trap, and brought to shore some four or five hundred cod, these are cleaned in little so-called tilts or curing houses. Often a day or two, and even longer, is required for this work, and then the fisherman makes himself a prisoner inside this tilt. The building rests, usually, on piles out over the water from the shore. The floor is a mere wattling of such little tree-trunks as these bleak coasts afford. Down below are thrown the heads, the entrails of the fish, and as the tide does not always wash these away, they decay and their odor rises up through the wattling. Then the walls, likewise, are of the wicker work of branches; so, too, is the

roof. Upon this latter, and against the walls, earth is set much as in the turf houses of Ireland. The door at one end is a staunch one, and, that the cold night wind may not get in, it is closed tightly. A great fire is maintained inside the tilt, and by and by the air within grows stifling. Here the men, the women, and often children work, eat, drink, and sleep.

Sometimes conditions are even worse. An upturned boat, no longer sea-worthy, will act as a house, and under this they live and perform their duties. Air, ventilation, there is none. Sunshine, obviously still less. The out-door life of the daytime hours is counteracted by the time spent here.

What is more, there is the most absolute disregard of the first laws of sanitation. Men will not hesitate to expectorate directly on the dried fish, allowing the *sputum* to evaporate, not only to the detriment of their non-afflicted fellows at work here, but of those who, eventually, will consume the fish. On being called to task for this, like a naughty child, the fisherman will use his own cap to wipe it up, and then set this on his head unconcerned. Consumptives wed consumptives, have children by them, and so the dread scourge goes on.

Again and again on the *Lake* one sees sad sights. One evening, for example, a *punt* put out to beg us to put off from our regular course, and divert into Occasional Harbor, whose name shows how little visited it is. A man was dying aboard one of the fishing smacks tied up here, wouldn't the doctor try, as he could, to at least alleviate his pains?

The Captain swore roundly, for every moment of time is precious to his masters, the wealthy ship's owners, who are, however, not known ever to have given a cent to a charity in all Newfoundland, withal that all their vast fortune has been drawn practically from the island.

Nevertheless the law is plain, and on the doctor's insistence he had to enter the harbor. Nearing the inlet where the vessel lay, we sounded our whistle as warning that we were coming. Then there came the echo, and we wondered if the dying man, waiting these two weeks, doubtless, for medical aid, had heard.

Nearer, and nearer, and nearer!

We could see a woman hurrying over the rocks, on first sight of us, perhaps to announce our approach ere we'd sounded the siren.

When the doctor went ashore and again onto that schooner, it was with all things that might be needed for the end.

The man, however, was not yet dead, though he was too sick to be taken aboard; so the doctor must leave specific instructions,—what to do, hour by hour, as the end approached; what on the other hand, to do, to give, and not to do, should he rally and turn for the better.

It would be a week at least before we, returning, would lie off this inlet again. Such is just one case at the hospital.

Again and again we will be halted by a white flag, and a fisher-punt comes out, the cod-takers bearing some comrade, his arm wrapped round about where a hook has sunk deep into it, or some of the painful bruises and boils caused by perpetual handling of the oars occurs. Then the ship halts while the doctor completes the bandaging, and the captain and the purser swear at the fishermen on the deck.

Now and then, an Indian half-breed or an Eskimo comes aboard. Interesting studies they make,—these people of the wildwood.

Or again one of the Moravian missionaries from up as far to the north as regular vessels ply will stand in need of treatment. Then is Mr. Peddle, the nurse, very busy.

And when they are well and off again, and the ship is on the seas, he entertains the passengers with his *Whale Song*, or his *Rolling Home to Terra Nuova*, the national anthem of Newfoundland.

THE NURSE AND THE TUBERCULOUS PATIENT*

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It has been truly said, "It is no sin not to know, but it is a sin not to learn." Nothing is so perilous to progress as the wilful ignorance resulting from scanty knowledge, because fear is always allied with this condition, and the combination thus established is disastrous in the extreme to advancement along any line. The great need of to-day is knowledge, which is the birthright of every human being. Not that destructive information which only whets the idle curiosity of the people, but that which creates a legitimate desire to know for the sake of putting the acquired knowledge to a practical use in the daily life, thereby throwing out an influence which always permeates society for the good of its individual members.

* Read at the International Congress on Tuberculosis, Washington, D. C.